UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

MIND, BODY, SPIRIT

Linking Lives for Health and Wholeness

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UCC Wellness Ministries Newsletter

July - August 2021, Vol. 6 Issue 4

REFLECTION:

Summer afternoon . . .
To me those have always been the two most beautiful words in the English language.

Henry James

UCC GENERAL SYNOD 33
July 11 – 18, 2021

From the first “uniting” General Synod gathered in 1957 in Cleveland, Ohio, to the most recent meeting in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, in 2019, the General Synod of the United Church of Christ has faithfully convened a meeting every two years. This year’s 33rd General Synod will be a virtual event. The theme is Rooted in Love.

Exhibit:
Wellness Ministries is part of the UCC Health and Wholeness Advocacy exhibit in the virtual Exhibit Hall at General Synod.

11:00 am - 6:00 pm

Wellness Ministries Activities at General Synod:
Note: General Synod registration is required to participate in the following activities.

Workshop:
Wednesday, July 8, 4:00-5:00 pm
Wellness Ministries: A Foundation for Addressing Health Disparity
Presented by Deborah Ringen,
UCC Wellness Ministries Leadership Team

General Synod Workshops, July 7 -10, 2021
Check the daily schedule to read about all 50 workshops.

Celebration:
UCC Wellness Ministries, will also participate in a **Celebration Event.**

Wednesday, July 14, 5:30 pm – 7:30 pm.

If you are attending General Synod, join UCC

Monday, 7/12 through Friday, 7/16

Each day members of the Leadership Team will be available to discuss health and wellness ministries. If you are attending General Synod, stop by and chat with us.

Health & Wholeness Advocacy in recognizing individuals and churches who have promoted mental health, physical health, and justice.

COVID-19 UPDATE:

Nearly all COVID deaths in US are now among the unvaccinated. CDC Director Dr. Rochelle Walensky said last week that the vaccine is so effective that "nearly every death, especially among adults, due to COVID-19, is, at this point, entirely preventable." She called such deaths "particularly tragic." As of May 22, 2021, COVID-19 vaccination coverage among U.S. adults was highest among adults aged ≥65 years and lowest among adults aged 18–29 years. Efforts to improve vaccination coverage are needed, especially among younger adults, to reduce COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations, and deaths. Community-based outreach efforts to increase vaccine confidence and reduce potential barriers to access could improve COVID-19 vaccination initiation, particularly among persons aged 18–29 years, and reduce the spread and impact of COVID-19 among the general U.S. population.

Travel plans are increasing as more people become fully vaccinated. The CDC offers guidelines for domestic travel. The CDC also has a travel planner where you can enter a city, zip code, address or national park name to learn more about COVID-19 travel restrictions, guidance, and resources in your destination.

UCC WELLNESS MINISTRIES UPDATE:

A new Wellness Ministries Toolkit is coming. The complete toolkit will be posted online in a book format that can be easily searched and read. Active links will lead to additional information that enables readers to go deeper into the topic of interest.

There are 3 sections to the Wellness Ministries Toolkit:

- Section 1: Envisioning Wellness Ministries - Providing the who, what, why, how, where

of Wellness Ministries
- Section 2: Establishing or Enhancing Wellness Ministries
- Section 3: Wellness Ministries of Care - experienced leaders explain the details of various programs they have offered.

Want to learn more? E-mail: wellnessministries@ucc.org

An Overview of Wellness Ministries is a recently produced short video that will premiere at the Health and Wholeness Advocacy exhibit at General Synod. After General Synod, it will be added to the Wellness Ministries section of the UCC website.

HEALTH OBSERVATION DATES JULY AND AUGUST 2021

JULY:

Ultraviolet (UV) Safety Awareness Month: The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has named July as Ultraviolet (UV) Safety Month. Overexposure to UV rays can cause numerous health issues. In addition to the risk of skin cancer, UV rays can cause macular degeneration, cataracts, skin growths, and suppression of the immune system.

Nearly all Americans say that sun protection is important, but almost half don't use sunscreen regularly and more than a third believe that tanning is healthy. A recent survey by the American Academy of Dermatology Association (AAD) found that:

- Four out of five adults know that sunscreen should be reapplied every 2 hours when they're outdoors, but only one in three make the actual effort.
- 77% are likely to use sunscreen at the beach or a pool, compared with 41% when they're gardening or working outside on their homes.

To learn more about sun protection and skin cancer prevention and test your skin cancer knowledge via a short quiz, visit PracticeSafeSun.org.

More resources on sun safety:

· American Cancer Society offers Be Safe in the Sun. It includes how to do a skin self-exam and a skin cancer image gallery

· The Oncology Nursing Society has information on UV Awareness and safety

· FDA article about medications causing photosensitivity with sun exposure.

· FDA Tips to Stay Safe in the Sun: From Sunscreen to Sunglasses

AUGUST:

Children's Eye Health and Safety Month
National Eye Institute (NEI) site includes eye health and safety information with fun stuff, printable posters, and coloring pages.

National Immunization Awareness Month: This initiative is an annual observance held in August to highlight the importance of vaccination for people of all ages. Many people are aware that children need various immunizations during childhood years. It is important to also inform adults that they need to keep their immunizations up to date because immunity from childhood vaccines can diminish over time. Adults may also be at risk for vaccine-preventable disease due to age, job, lifestyle, travel, or health conditions. The CDC describes adult vaccine schedules.

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM IDEAS

Health Tips During Hot Weather:

Staying hydrated is necessary for health. The hot weather of summer makes this even

Extreme heat is responsible for the highest number of annual deaths among all weather-

more important. The United States Department of Agriculture's Nutrition section offers information on water, hydration and health.

The American Heart Association adds staying hydrated is important for heart health. An educational poster can share information about symptoms of dehydration. The CDC lists Warning Signs and Symptoms of Heat-Related Illness.

Many areas of the country are currently experiencing extreme heat days. Extreme heat is a period of high heat and humidity with temperatures above 90 degrees for at least two to three days.

related hazards. Ready.gov offers advice for how to stay safe when extreme heat threatens. This is a time to check on older individuals and those with underlying health conditions who are at higher risk for heat-related illnesses.

The American Academy of Pediatrics provides information for parents on Protecting Children from Extreme Heat and also information to Prevent Child Deaths in Hot Cars.

A special note about pets during extreme heat: The Humane Society of the United States offers pet safety tips and the ASPCA also offers hot weather safety tips.

Swimming Safety

Summer recreation often includes swimming – at pools, lakes, rivers, and the ocean. Key to enjoying time in the water means also practicing safe swimming tips. Life jackets save lives. The Red Cross offers two picture sets that show how to use a life jacket and when and where to wear a life jacket.

Beach time means knowing about rip currents and what to do if caught in a rip tide while swimming in the ocean. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has two videos with valuable information about how to recognize rip currents and how to survive a rip current.

Orthopaedic surgeons share injury prevention tips
Diving Safety Tips
Never dive headfirst in above-ground pools or unclear water
Swim away from board after dive to make room for next diver
One at a time on diving board
Never dive into shallow water
Don't drink and dive
For more information, visit OrthoInfo.org
AAOS
American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons
OrthoInfo

Nearly 26,000 individuals are treated in emergency departments, doctors' offices, and clinics for diving-related injuries in the U.S. each year, according to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC)The American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons. Their website offers diving safety statistics and also tips for safe diving.

Emergency Preparedness:

Summer may bring weather emergencies such as severe thunderstorms, tornadoes, and hurricanes. Earthquakes and forest fires may necessitate home evacuations. Education can focus on preparedness before disasters occur and responses during and after an event. The American National Red Cross's Emergency Resource Library has key points for preparedness/response for 23 types of emergencies and natural disasters. FEMA provides information on how to build a kit for emergencies.

Mosquito-Borne and Tick-Borne illnesses: Cases of illness from mosquito, tick, and flea bites tripled in the U.S. from 2004 to 2016. Most of these illnesses are related to tick bites. The Missouri Department of Health and Human Services website offers a resource that includes fact sheets on common tick-borne diseases and information cards on tick bite prevention and a picture card on checking for ticks.

The CDC tick information includes tick identification, tick removal, illness signs and symptoms, and maps of where ticks are found. Tips are shared on preventing tick bites. It also includes information about Alpha-Gal Syndrome (AGS), also called alpha-gal allergy, red meat allergy, or tick bite meat allergy. Most cases reported to date are among people living in the southeastern United States. Growing evidence suggests that AGS may be triggered by the bite of a lone star or blacklegged tick.

Aging Resources:
Partners in Health and Wholeness – an initiative of the NC Council of Churches has developed a Resource Guide on Healthy Aging. The initial section provides information on NC aging services and resources, followed by information on Aging-related Health/Mental Health Resources, Medicare Resource Guides, LGBTQ Resources, and a Reading Guide for Books on Aging and Spirituality.

National Aging in Place offers a Cost of Aging Handbook to help older adults and their families make plans for later life.

ON-LINE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS:

HMA Annual Conference: This conference will be held virtually over 3 weeks in October, with sessions offered 2 days each week. The brochure includes dates, descriptions of the keynote presentations and workshops, schedules, and fees. Registration is now open.

The Insurance Board is a nonprofit corporation established by the participating Conferences of the United Church of Christ. It offers free online educational programs related to COVID-19, human resources, emergency planning, and general safety.

KEEP CONNECTED:

Visit our Facebook and LinkedIn pages:
Post comments or share information about your health ministries; join in conversations.

Future issues:
Have something you want to share with colleagues?
Are you looking for a resource to assist you in your ministry?

Contact us, wellnessministries@ucc.org

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